

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-05

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6582

INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

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LIMDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT, SG

SUBJ: SENGHOR'S HEALTH AND FUTURE

REF: DAKAR 6359

1. AMBASSADOR COHEN AND EMBOFF CALLED ON QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR WEST AFRICA CHRISTIAN DE LA ROCHERE AUGUST 25. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION CONCERNING SENGHOR'S HEALTH, LA ROCHERE SAID THAT HE WAS AWARE OF NO INFORMATION INDICATING THAT SENGHOR IS ILL. SENGHOR IS SEVENTY-TWO YEARS OLD, HAS SOME MEDICAL PROBLEMS AND TIRES MORE QUICKLY NOW, BUT SO FAR AS HE IS AWARE, THE GENERAL STATE OF SENGHOR'S HEALTH IS QUITE GOOD.

2. LA ROCHERE THEN WENT ON TO SPEAK OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SENGHOR'S RESIGNING. HE SAID THAT THE GOF PRESUMPTION IS THAT IF SENGHOR WERE TO WITHDRAW FROM ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT WHILE STILL IN A SECRET

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GOOD STATE OF HEALTH, EITHER TO LIVE IN FRANCE OR IN SENEGAL, THE PROSPECTS FOR CONTINUED STABILITY AND A SMOOTH TRANSITION WOULD BE GOOD. LA ROCHERE SAID HE BELIEVES THAT ABDOU DIOUF, ONCE OUT OF SENGHOR'S SHADOW, WOULD EMERGE AS A STRONG AND EFFECTIVE LEADER WHO WOULD RAPIDLY DEVELOP A WIDE BASE OF SUPPORT. LA ROCHERE INDICATED THAT THE QUESTION OF SENGHOR'S

RESIGNING IS UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION. HE SAID
SENGHOR'S WIFE IS URGING IT ON HIM. AMBASSADOR COHEN
SUGGESTED THAT SENHOR'S TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY IN
POWER IN 1980 COULD PRESENT A SUITABLE OCCASION FOR
HIS WITHDRAWAL FROM ACTIVE LIFE. LA ROCHERE SAID HE
THOUGHT THE RESIGNATION MIGHT TAKE PLACE WELL BEFORE
THEN, BUT DID NOT FURTHER AMPLIFY WHY HE BELIEVED SUCH
AN EVENT MIGHT NOT BE TOO FAR IN THE FUTURE.
HARTMAN

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NNN

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